

TESTIMONY FROM LAURA BURBAN, DIRECTOR OF BRANFORD ANIMAL SHELTER, IN FAVOR OF HB 5408.

Hi My name is Laura Burban- I am the Director of the Branford Animal Shelter in Branford CT as well as an Animal Control Officer. We are responsible for the Towns of Branford and North Branford. I would first like to Thank representative Lonnie Reed for working on Bill 5408, so that I may be here today.

In recognizing that we are in a recession, but still there being a need for public safety I feel very strongly that animals should be vaccinated and sterilized before being adopted into their new homes. We expect and enforce that the public take care of their animals by vaccinating them and providing them with the basic necessities. I feel it is the responsibility as a governmental agency that we should be setting the standard for the public. This bill would enable Shelters, but NOT mandate them to provide these animals with vaccinations and sterilizations by passing along the costs to potential adopters. Currently, we use the APCP program which while it is a great program, it is not 100% fool proof. Over the last six years approx 36% of all animals participating in the program were not vaccinated or sterilized- this means approximately 10,019 went without any procedures. Just to give you some examples of what this means just for procreation rates : One cat and her mate will produce twelve kittens in a year-That same cat and her mate and their new kittens will produce 67 in the second year, and by six years later they will have produced 66,088 and this number is taking into account kittens dying from natural causes every litter! Dogs follow a very similar pattern that by six years they produce 67,000 as well! This is obviously concerning for many reasons- many of these unwanted animals end up in shelters, some end up living wild and some end up dead on the street.

This bill would allow shelters that want to participate to be more proactive in speaking with their local vets to offer discounted rates to shelters, so that those discounts would be passed on to the adopter. The animals would leave healthy and completely altered and the adopter would have an animal that was completed upon pick up. At the very least shelters will have the option to vaccinate the animals before they leave to ensure there is no public health risk. This Bill does not force any municipality to Fund or alter anything, what it does do is allows them the option should they choose. By supporting this bill you would be supporting public safety, animal safety and permitting shelters to be more proactive with the animals they care for. Thank you for your time and consideration.